time. Yakut pots are easily broken and remain porous until milk has been repeatedly boiled in them. The rims, the upper part, and sometimes the whole pot, are ornamented by impressions made with wooden stamps (*kūōs oyūlūr mas*, wood for ornamenting pottery). These design motives have special names; for instance, Fig. 53*d*, is called *tyñyrachtach torduya;* Fig. 53*g* is *biltägir*.

Though pottery-making was known to the Yakut since neolithic times it never developed into a real art. This may be explained partly by their early acquaintance with the manufacture of metals, particularly iron, which among the Yakut preceded that of bronze. Clay vessels came to be used more frequently as containers for liquids than as cooking utensils. However, fluids cannot be kept in them a long time without spoiling. After cooking the pot is cleaned with an iron scraper called *kāsĭr* (Fig. 48) and dried.

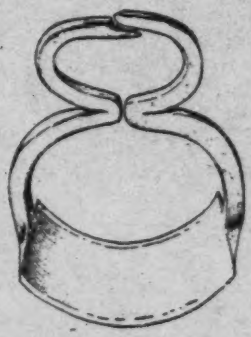

Fig. 48 (70-8775). An Iron Scraper for Clay Cooking Pots.

The forms of clay vessels vary; the commonest is an egg-like shape, the flat bottom of which is much smaller than the mouth. As may be seen from the illustration (Fig. 49*a–d*) the tea pots and charcoal stoves (Fig. 49*a*, *c*) to keep them warm are made after the Russian fashion. The size ranges from small cups for children to vessels capable of holding four to six gallons.

Additional evidence of the antiquity of the industry among the Yakut appears in the Turkic names for pottery-making implements and vessels. A clay pot is called *kūōs;* a metal kettle is called *salyr*. Even in places where, as in the northern districts of Yakut Province, no pottery is made at present, the word *kūōs* is well known and used as a linear measure. In terms of linear measure one may say, "one pot," "two pots," "pot of a walker, horse, or ox rider." For *kūōs* (pot) the Yakut understand a distance of from seven to twelve versts (from 6.6 to 8 miles). Translating *kūōs* in terms of time, it means a period during which a pot with meat for an average family is cooked. In Afghanistan *kūōs* is used as a linear measure of about eighteen miles. Böhtlingk[1] distinguishes the word *kūōs* as a unit of time from *kōs* as a linear measure as does Pekarsky in his Yakut-Russian dictionary, where he interprets *kōs* as a term for a day's journey from one camping place to another.

The Yakut do not know how to wash clay or to temper it, using it as it is found, with all its impurities, quartz and other non-plastic materials

[1] Böhtlingk, *ibid.*

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

The Yakut are mediocre tinsmiths. They solder with pewter though the result is coarse and bulky. The northern Yakut tin with a soldering iron. They do not make tin ware and are unskilled in riveting metals. On the other hand, most of the Yakut blacksmiths are excellent copper and silver workers.

Copper, Gold, and Silversmiths. Most Yakut blacksmiths are expert workers in copper and silver. European archaeologists regard copper and gold as the first metals employed on an appreciable scale between

Fig. 61 *ab* (70–8576), *cd* (70–9073). Child's and Woman's Silver Bracelets. Front and back views.

the Neolithic Period and the Bronze Age. The first copper objects had no tin alloy. Modern Yakut metal workers also use pure copper. From both copper and silver they mould fine, well made small objects, buckles, rings, earrings, crosses, seals, chains, pendants, and other ornaments. From copper scraps they mould and hammer large kettles, tea pots, and even church bells. Their skill in casting equals or even exceeds their smithing. They also smelt and cast gold, making rings, earrings, and bracelets. For smelting copper, silver, and gold, they use small clay forms. Silver is the most desirable metal. They do not like gold,

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

326
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saying that it looks like copper. Silver plates for saddles are made by smelting a thick plate and hammering it thin. The quality of their silver varies. The best silver objects, the Yakut say, contain 50 per cent of silver, the rest is copper and zinc. The Yakut do not know zinc, but obtain it from imported Russian metallic ware, like latten-brass objects.

Silver Objects. A series of silver bracelets is illustrated in Fig. 61. Fig. 61*cd* is a pair of silver bracelets (*bōhōx*), showing the reverse and

Fig. 62 (70-8669, 8670). A Silver Cup and Saucer with engraved Symbolic Representations of Plants.

a *b*

Fig. 63*a*(70-8764), *b*(70-9139). Silver Ornaments. *a*, A decorated silver disc, part of the embellishment for a woman's cap; *b*, A silver belt buckle.

obverse, with the clasp fastened. A child's silver bracelets (*ohobōhōhō*) are engraved with symbolic representation of plants. On the large bracelets (Fig. 61*cd*) is also engraved a zigzag or finger ornament.

A silver cup and saucer, with engraved symbolic representations of plants is illustrated in Fig. 62. Under the upper rim and above the bottom of the cup are circles resembling twisted basketry fiber. The same pattern is repeated on the saucer. Both the cup (*chāsky*) and the saucer (*būlūcha*) are called by distorted Russian names which are

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

actually: *chaska* and *bludéchko*, demonstrating that both vessels were adopted from the Russians. On the other hand, all the wooden goblets and other kumiss vessels have genuine Yakut-Turkic names.

Fig. 63*a* is a silver disc (*tusaxta*) used for the decoration of the front of the top of a woman's fur cap. The engraved ornamentation represents

Fig. 64 *a* (70–9165), *b* (70–9139), *c* (70–8519). Riding Gear. *a*, *c*, Whips with silver ornamented handles; *b*, Silver ornamented bridle.

a symbolic plant pattern. In Fig. 63*b* is illustrated a silver belt buckle called *biräskä*, the Yakut version of the Russian word, *pryáshka*. Of interest is the central ornament consisting of connecting curves.

Two whips with handles ornamented in silver and a similarly decorated bridle are illustrated in Fig. 64*a–c*. Whips so decorated are

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

gun; a man kneeling with drawn bow; three firs with a squirrel on the top of the middle one; a Yakut earth hut; a woman with a pail going to milk a cow. A comb of mammoth ivory ornamented in filigree and an ivory ear pick may be seen in Fig. 85. All other ornamentation

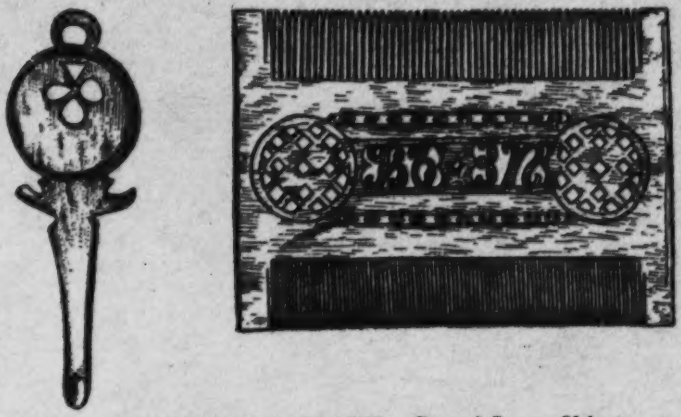

Fig. 85 *a* (70-9088), *b* (70-9097). Carved Ivory Objects. *a*, An ear pick; *b*, A comb of mammoth ivory with filigree decoration.

Fig. 86 (70-8889). Bone Goblet.

of wood or bone objects consists of geometric, skewomorphic, and conventionalized designs. Only the legs or bases of large wooden kumiss goblets realistically represent horses' legs and hoofs. To show the great variety of non-realistic decorative design motives we will analyze the decoration of goblets and other vessels used in kumiss festivals.

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

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Fig. 88. Circle Dance, a Part of the Kumiss Festival.

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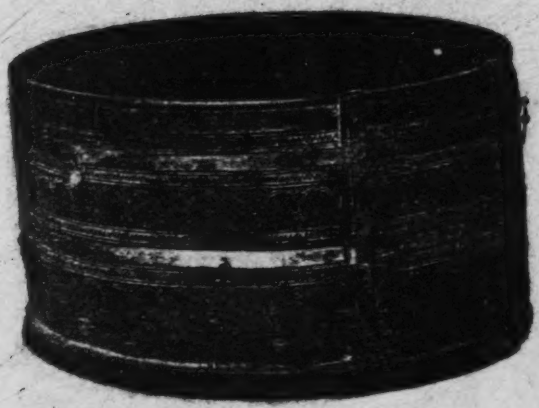

Fig. 89 (70-8613). Cylindrical Wooden Vessel used in the Kumiss Festival.

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

dramatized in a contest between two men. One, dressed in white, represented spring, and was called "son of creator" (*ayi uola*); the other, clad in black, represented winter, and was called "son of evil spirit" (*abasy uola*).

The autumnal festival was celebrated in honor of the destructive forces and was therefore called *abasy-ysyax*. It was dedicated to the evil spirits (*abasylar*), the inhabitants of the west and the representatives of darkness and night, in order that they may not interfere with them in winter, when starvation, disease, and death are imminent. This festival also took place in the open air, but at night.

The first night, the ceremony was in honor of Big-Lord (*Ulu-Toyon*) and the evil spirits of the upper world subordinate to him. The ceremony of the second night was in honor of *Axsan Duolai* and his subordinates, the evil spirits of the lower world. To all of these evil spirits, in addition to the libations of kumiss made to the benevolent deities, blood sacrifices of cattle and horses were also made. This ceremony was superintended by nine male and nine female shamans.

Kumiss Vessels and their Decorations

Kumiss vessels may be divided into three types, according to form:—

1. The *corōn*, a very large urn-shaped goblet with a small base holding from ten to fifteen liters of kumiss. Their small bases make them unstable. To drink from them, they must be held with both hands. Three large goblets of varying sizes are reproduced in Fig. 91. Two of them, in addition to the engraved decorations, are ornamented with silver hoops and pendants and one with pendants of red cloth and hair from a horse's mane.

2. *Us ataxtāx corōn*, i.e., tripod goblets of smaller size are illustrated in Fig. 90. Fig. 90*a* is ornamented with silver rings.

3. Cylindrical vessels with set-in bottoms of varying sizes, and named according to their size, the small one, *mācax:* and the large ones, *ymyja*.

All these drinking vessels are made from the strong, tough wood of the polar birch tree. The first two types are carved and hollowed from one piece. Formerly the adze was the implement used for hollowing but recently a chisel. The finish, polish, and decoration are accomplished with knives only. The sides of these goblets are made very thin and they easily crack when drying. A goblet left empty in the sun for a single day is sure to crack. To guard against injury, they are kept in a dark, damp place, and are also freely oiled with melted butter, which gives them a

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

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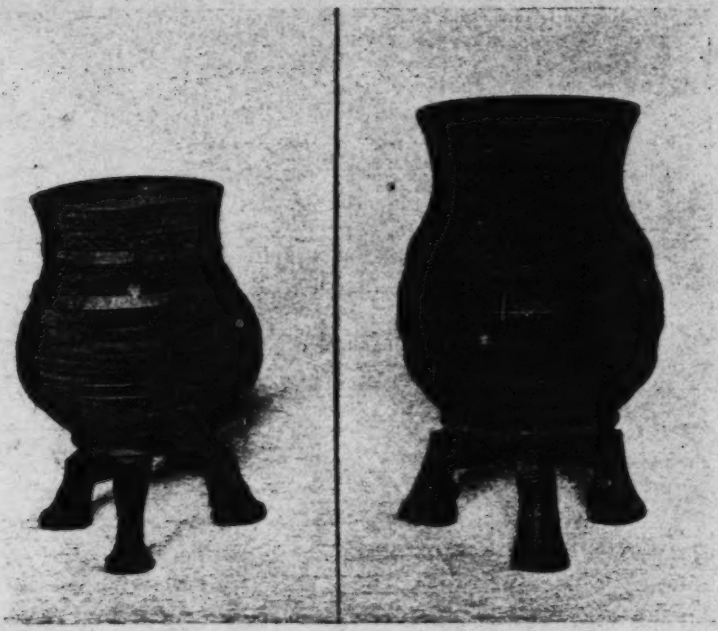

Fig. 90 *a* (70–8655), *b* (70–9205), *c* (70–8656). Wooden Tripod Goblets used in the Kumiss Festival.

Fig. 91 *a* (70–9060), *b* (70–9206). Wooden Goblets for Kumiss.

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

dark brown polish. The large kumiss ladles are also oiled for the same reason. Fig. 92 *a–c* illustrates such a ladle and the engravings at the end and the middle of the handle.

The decorative patterns on kumiss vessels are possibly as old as the religion with which they are connected. In them we find no Central Asiatic or Chinese decorative motives of the more advanced periods of

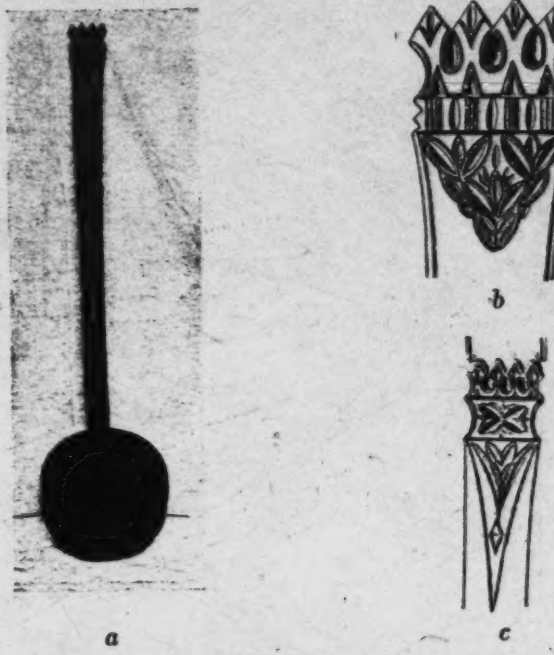

Fig. 92 *a–c* (60-8781). Large Wooden Kumiss Ladle used to fill the Drinking Goblets and Vessels from the Skin Barrel. *b–c*, Details of engravings at the end and middle of the ladle handle.

Asiatic culture; but we do find such decorative motives, consisting of complicated curves, spirals, coils, conventionalized plants and animals on their clothing, saddles, and silverware. The ornamentation of the kumiss vessels consists almost exclusively of geometrical figures which, judging from their native names, represent, in more or less conventionalized form, implements or other household objects.

Fig. 93 presents a series of patterns which occur most frequently on the kumiss vessels.

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

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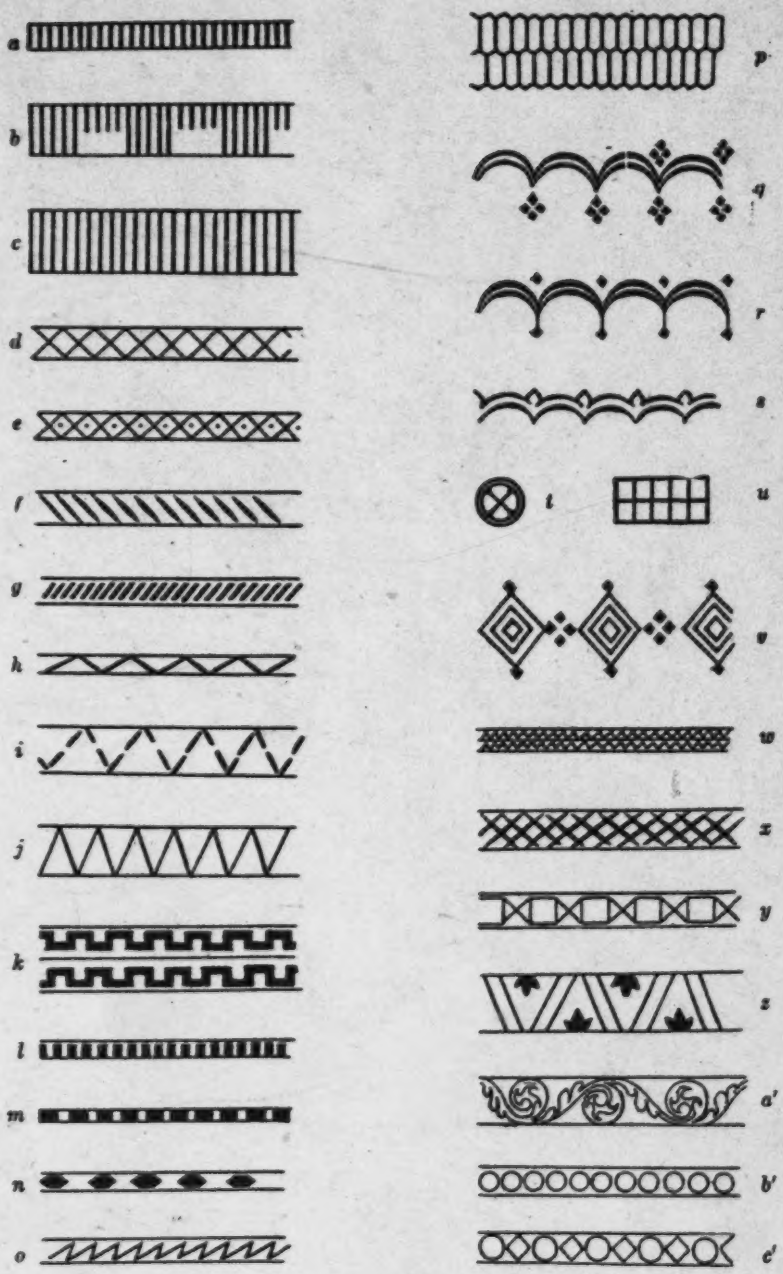

Fig. 93. Designs carved on Kumiss Vessels.

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

Figs. 93*a–c* are called *tarāx oyū*, that is, comb ornament, and represent combs. 445 531

Figs. 93*d–e*, are called *ilim xaraha oyū*, that is, net's eyes ornament. They represent fish nets. The dots in Fig. 93*e* stand, most probably, for fish caught.

Figs. 93*f–g*, are called *āriyā oyū*, that is, wound ornament (from the verb *ārii*, to wind). They represent the weaving of baskets by winding thread around bunches of grass. The same rope-pattern on the birch-bark bucket, Fig. 99, which was made by winding horsehair thread round the hoop of the bucket, is called *āriyā tigi*, which means "twisted sewing."

Figs. 93*h–j* are called *urasa oyū*, that is, tent ornament. These zigzag patterns represent the large conical birchbark summer tents of the Yakut. The same pattern embroidered in thread or sinew on skin bags is called *urasaly tigī*, that is, tent embroidery.

Fig. 93*n* is called *kybytya oyū*, that is, wedge ornament (from the verb *kybyt*, to force in), and represents a wooden wedge for splitting wood.

Fig. 93*v* is called *timāx tördö oyū*, which means button-base ornament. This pattern, consisting of a series of three or four inscribed diamonds, used to be embroidered on the old-time clothing of the Yakut, at the places where the buttons were sewed on.

Fig. 93*w* is called *kārdis oyū*, that is, notched ornament, and represents the primitive Yakut writing by means of notches on sticks.

Figs. 93*b'–c'* are called *kohuor oyū*, that is, kumiss skin bag ornament, and represent large hide kumiss vessels.

It is of interest to note that all the patterns so far mentioned are of a purely decorative character, have no connection with religious ideas, and consist not alone of the simple units but of their highly harmonious and extremely symmetrical repetition.

Neither in the engraving and carving on the wooden kumiss vessels, nor in the embroidery on the leather and birchbark containers, do we find any realistic representation of animals or objects. Realistic art was evidently unknown in the past. The old-time Yakut considered it a sin for any one except shamans to carve human figures from wood. The shamans carve these figures roughly of wood, to represent guardians or evil spirits, for use in religious ceremonies, and they are not regarded as harmless to ordinary folk. I saw figures of cows and horses carved from wood or birchbark, to be used by children as playthings, but there were never any dolls. Some Yakut, living not far from the Russian town of Yakutsk, carve, among other things, human figures from ivory; but I consider this to be a rather inartistic imitation of the carvings of the neighboring tribes. 532 789 [177]

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

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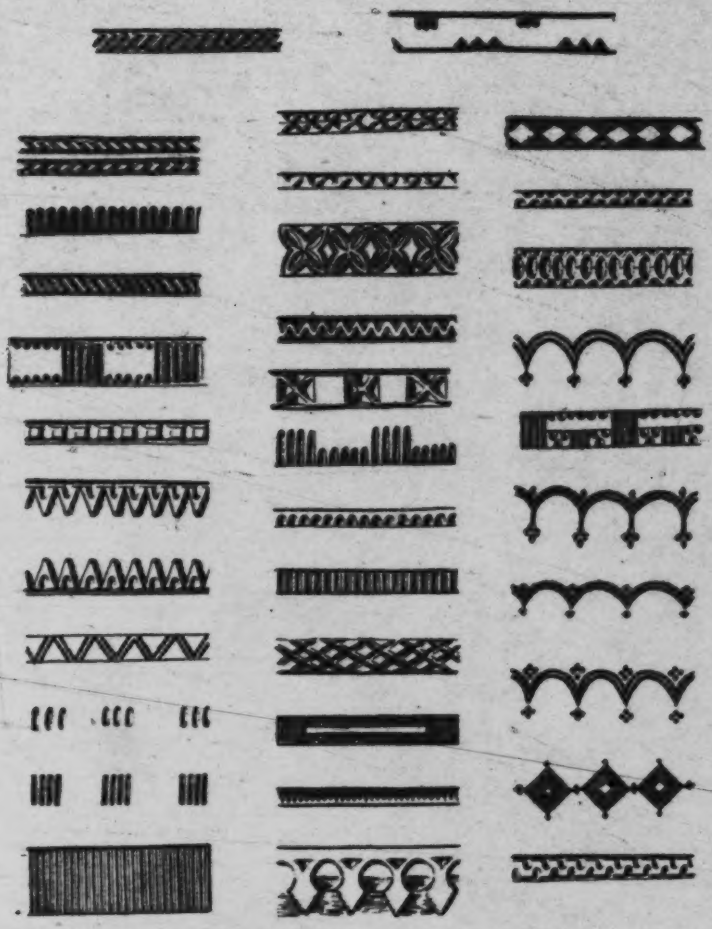

Fig. 94. Relief Carvings on Various Kumiss Vessels. The majority are variants of motives given in Fig. 93.

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

consider this to be a rather inartistic imitation of the carvings of the neighboring tribes.

The only attempt at realistic reproduction in the ornamentation of kumiss vessels is to be found in the carving of horses' hoofs. Thus the bases of the tripod goblets (Fig. 90) are often carved in the shape of horses' hoofs. The mouthpiece of the kumiss churning vessel often has the form of a horse's hoof (Fig. 95*b*). The base of a wooden stand for a

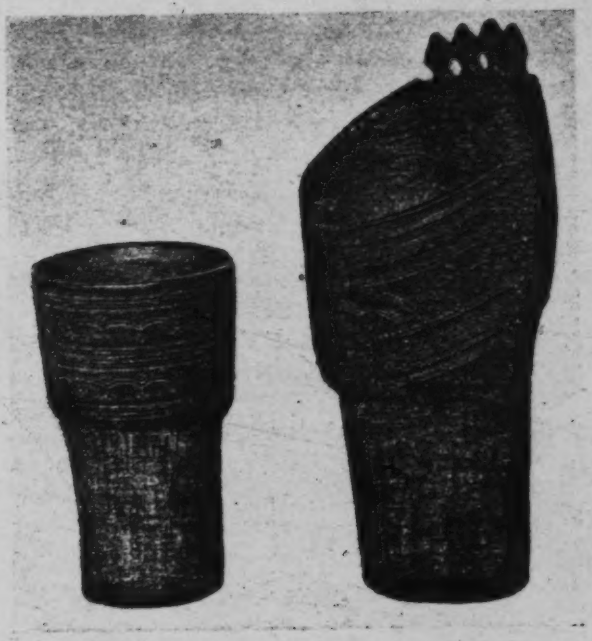

Fig. 95 *a* (70-9067), *b* (70-9266). Two Wooden Funnels for Kumiss Churns.

leather kumiss churn is also in the form of horses' hoofs (see Fig. 96). Even in conventionalized form we do not find the representation of an animal or human figure, not even that of a horse, which forms an object of their animal cult; but, judging from the Yakut names, we do meet with conventionalized representations of parts of the human body.

Thus Fig. 93*l* is called *tonohos oyū*, that is, vertebral ornament, and represents the spine or neck vertebra.

Fig. 93*o* is called *tyñyrax oyū*, which means nail ornament and represents human nails. Fig. 93*p*, is called *Tarbax oyū* which is finger

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

415 531 323

ornament, and is a conventionalization of the human finger. On birchbark vessels we find the same motive embroidered in horsehair (see Fig. 98), and it is then called *tarhaxtŷ tigī*, which means finger embroidery. Among other birchbark techniques, Fig. 98*a–e* also shows the finger

415 531

Fig. 96 (70-9267). A Kumiss Churn on a Wooden Stand.

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embroidery. It is likely that the nail and finger ornaments originated in work in pottery which is still preserved in a very primitive form.

Fig. 93*u* is an ornament copied by me from a Yakut clay pot, and is called *tyñyraxtax torduya*, which means nail-raising. But this pattern is

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

415 531 323

impressed in the soft clay not with the nail, but with a wooden stamp called *kūōs oyūlūr mas*, meaning a stick (*mas*) for the ornamentation of clay pots (*kūōs*). Fig. 93*t* is also stamped on clay pots and is called *būttāghir torduya*, which means "rounded raising," but this pattern is also found on kumiss vessels.

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There can also be found on kumiss vessels a pattern unillustrated called *tañalai oyū* (palate-ornament). It consists of small curves which represent the arch of the palate. It should be added that under this

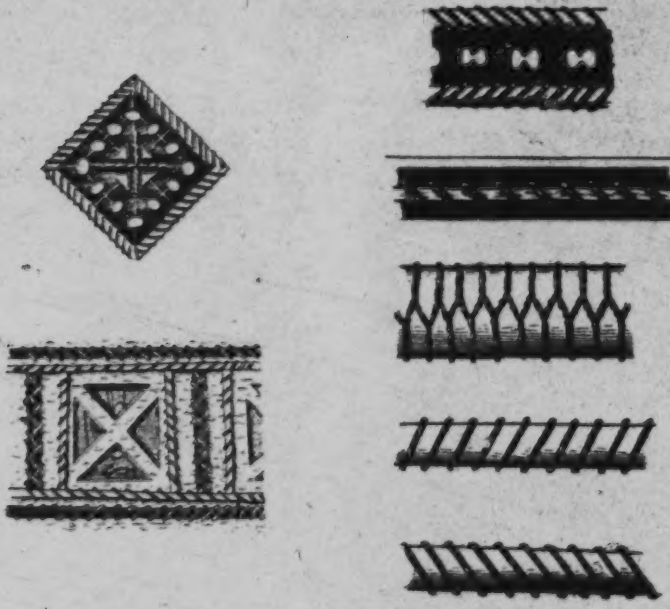

Fig. 98. Details of Embroidery and Sewing on Birchbark Vessels.

name (or *oncoho tañalai oyū*) is also known the decoration on small fur rugs made of alternating stripes of white and black horses' skins. (Fig. 97).

Figs. 93*q–s* are often seen engraved in or embroidered on kumiss vessels. They are called *sarbyn'n'ax oyū* (hanging ornament). This pattern is made with the concave face turned either downwards or upwards. In the first case it represents the hanging arch of the sky; in the second, a rope hung by its two ends. In a form similar to the latter it is also found on Western European Neolithic clay pots and was named *Schnurgehänge* by the German archaeologists, which name coincides with that of the Yakut.

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

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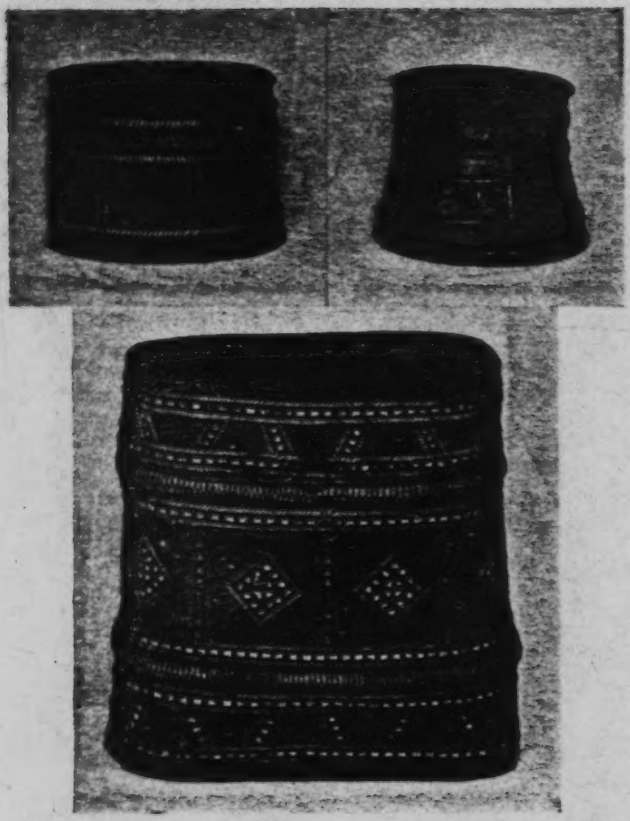

Fig. 99 *a–c* (70–8619,9058,8807). Birchbark Boxes. *a* and *b*, Women's trinket boxes in which sewing materials and other implements are stored; *c*, A storage box for fur caps, boas, mittens, silver ornaments, and other treasured possessions.

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

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Fig. 100 (70–8862). Birchbark Kumiss Bucket with "Finger-Embroidery."

Fig. 101

Fig. 102

Fig. 101 (70–9065). A Cross Design on a Kumiss Churn Stick.

Fig. 102 (70–9206, 9260, 9060, 8713, 8884, 8869). Figures in Relief engraved on Kumiss Goblets. The motives represent conventionalized plants, vertebral ornaments, net ornaments, and a cross.

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

415 ●
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177

The kumiss goblets are usually decorated by engraving the pattern on the even surface of the vessel. But we also find patterns carved in relief; for instance, the net motive previously mentioned may be found in relief on the goblets shown in Fig. 91. Some patterns in relief (see Fig. 93k) have a common name, *tomtorgo oyū*, meaning simply relief ornament, and referring only to the style of carving, and not to the pattern meaning.

Figs. 93*z*–*a'*, which include conventionalized plants, are called *usuor oyū*. The word *usuor* is borrowed from the Russian word *uzor* (in Polish *wzor*), which means pattern. The patterns too are evidently borrowed from Russian decorative motives.

In the same way, judging from the names, the linear ornaments of Fig. 93*x*–*y*—the first called *duobat oyū*, and the second *saxymat oyū*—must be regarded as borrowed from the Russian. *Duobat* is the old Russian word *doved* (at present *shashka*), which means the game of draughts; and *saxymat*, which is the Russian word *shakhmat*, means chess.

6: Sauer--116-117 G-5 (1785-94) 1802 Yakut
116, 231, 415, 273, 796

"Their holidays commence with the month of June, and last about 15 days. The mares having cast, a short time is allowed the colts to suck, that they may acquire strength; they are then tied up, or pent in coops about the hut, to prevent their sucking at will; which is only allowed twice a day, when the mares are milked. The milk is collected in symirs, or large leather buckets formed like a bottle, wide at bottom, and narrow at the top, each [117] containing about an anker; into this a small piece of the stomach of a calf or colt is thrown, and some water mixed with it. It is then kept in constant agitation by a broad-ended stick, until it ferments, and acquires an agreeable acidity, which is very nourishing; and if taken in great quantities, it has an intoxicating quality. Of this drink, which they call koumis, every one collects as much as he can; and some of the chiefs obtain more than 500 ankers of it. A day is then fixed upon by each chief to consecrate his stock, which is performed as follows: [RCH: see category 116, pp. 117-119]."

6: Sauer--128 G-5 (1785-94) 1802 Yakut

415

"An ayach (1) is filled with koumis, and handed by two men to the three kneeling, each

1. An urn-shaped wooden vessel with three legs, which contains from two to four gallons.

of whom empties an ayach at three draughts."

11: Lansdell--301 M-3 (1879) 1882 Yakut
116, 237, 352, 415

"The houses are not overstocked with furniture, and the chief cooking utensil is a large iron pot. At the time of the invasion of the Russians, this article was deemed such a treasure that the price asked for a pot was as many sable-skins as would fill it. They use also in winter a bowl-shaped frame of wicker-work, plastered with frozen cow-dung, in which they pound their porridge."

16: Great Britain Admiralty -- 166-167 G-3 (no date) 1920 Yakut
116, 237, 372, 415

"Their winter dwellings are yurtas made of logs: the doors are made of raw hides, the walls of logs or wicker, caulked with cow-dung and flanked with banks of earth to the height of the windows. In place of glass they have in the windows either skins or sheets of ice which are kept in place by slanting poles, and frozen afresh into their positions at intervals by pouring water round the edges. The roofs are flat and covered with earth. The door faces east, and is protected by projecting boards. Inside the yurta is divided into two 'apartments': one is for the cattle, the other divided into sections for the family. In the middle is a round chimney made of wood, but guarded against risk of fire by a thick covering of clay. In this chimney are placed cross-beams, from which they hang their kettles and pots. Their chief cooking utensil is a large iron pot; this was so [167] valuable when the Russians invaded their teritory that the price demanded for it was as many sable-skins as would fill it. In the summer they live in conical tents of birch-bark; the poles of which these are made are about 20 ft. long, united at the top; these are covered with pieces of flexible birch- bark, 'handsomely worked along the edge with horsehair thread.'"

17: Erman--305 N-3 (1828-29) 1850 Yakut
116, 281, 415

"These bags, made by the Yakuts, and alone used here by the Russians, are called súmui. They are made of horse-leather, with the hair stripped off. The side thus stripped is turned outwards, and, from its smoothness, and whitish hue, it closely resembles parchment. The súmui most carefully made, are those used for carrying flour from this to Okhotsk and Kamchatka. They are cylinders only three or four inches high, and about a foot and a half in diameter, joined by a scarcely visible seam inside, and filled through a small opening in the side. On the journey, they lie with the flat surface against the animal's flanks."

39: Jochelson E-5 (1888-97) 1906 Yakut

231 mares for milking, can be found only in those districts far removed from the centres of influence of Russian culture, and they belong to a few very rich families.

178 273 234 757 262 Together with the passing of the production of kumiss, the ancient ornamented kumiss vessels and goblets are also disappearing, as well as the customs, festivals, and ceremonials associated with the production and use of kumiss. Kumiss, which of late has been recommended by physicians as an excellent therapeutic agent in some diseases, was known as a nutritious form of food in remotest antiquity to all the nomadic peoples of Central Asia and of the southeastern part of Europe. Herodotus also mentions it. It is poorer in fat, casein, albumen, and salts, but much richer in milk-sugar, than cow's milk, and therefore is not adapted for butter and cheese making. Fresh mare's milk tastes somewhat disagreeably sweetish. The Yakut do not like it fresh as a drink, but they take it when it is boiled, and also in their tea. Formerly they made from it — cooked with the pounded roots of *Lilium spectabile, L. martagon, Butomus umbellatus,* or *Artemisia vulgaris* — a kind of gruel called *butahas*. As far as we know at present, the preparation of kumiss from mare's milk is based on the fermentation caused by micro-organisms. Under their influence, the milk-sugar turns to lactic acid. When this process is over, the fermentation of alcohol from the lactic acid begins. It has been found of late years that the micro-organisms of kumiss, like those of kephir (a fermented drink prepared from cow's milk), form grains, which can be washed, dried, and preserved. With their aid, kumiss is nowadays prepared for medicinal purposes.

234 273 The Yakut, like the Kirghis and Bashkir, use as a ferment some old kumiss or the residue of the kumiss of the past year, carefully collected from the vessels, and dried and preserved. This ferment of kumiss is called *xoyū* ("pulp"). If they have none, the Yakut, as well as the Bashkir, use sour cow's milk as a ferment; but such kumiss is not considered good by [415] the Yakut. When the mare is being milked, buckets made of birch-bark (see Plate XXII, Fig. 4) are used as vessels to receive the fluid. When the milking is finished, the buckets are left until the milk becomes cold, when it is diluted with an equal

39: Jochelson E-5 (1888-97) 1906 Yakut

facing P. 261

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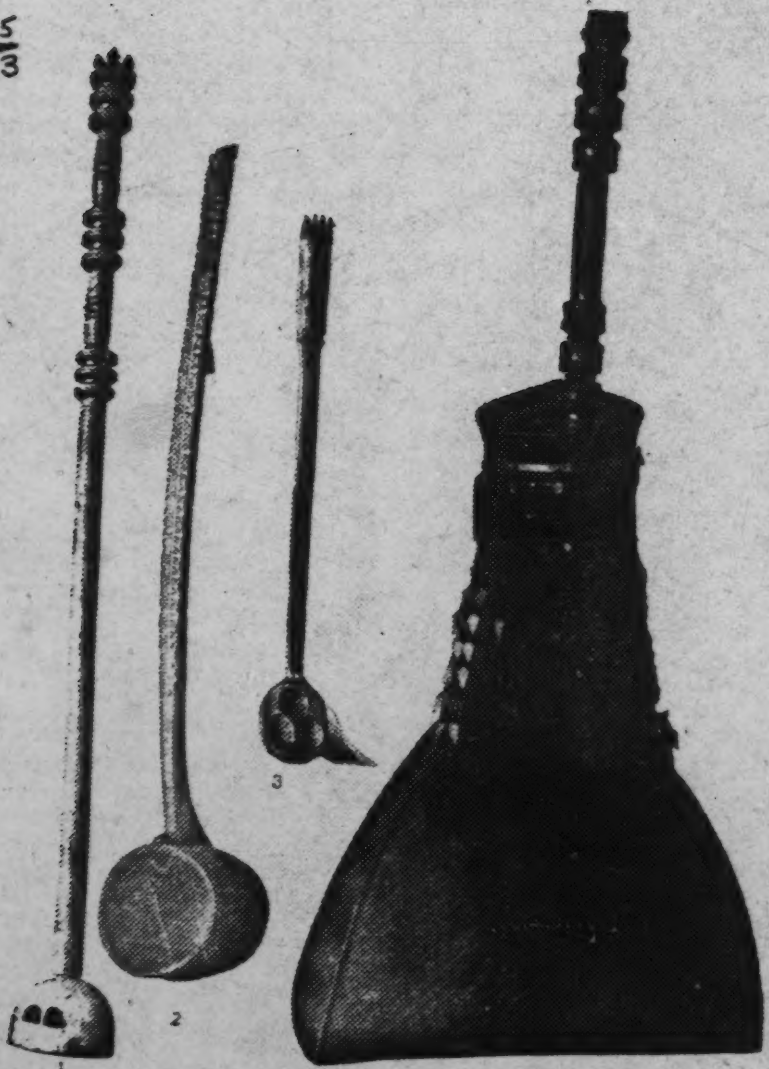

KUMISS CHURN, STICK, AND LADLES OF THE YAKUT.

39: Jochelson E-5 (1888-97) 1906 Yakut

quantity of cold water which has been previously boiled; and the mixture is put into an ox-hide bag or churning-vessel called *simir* (Plate XVIII, Fig. 4), and some of the above-mentioned ferment is added to it. The only use of the water is to increase the quantity; so that when a strong kumiss is desired, less water is added to the milk. The churning-bag is made of ox-hide which has been soaked in blood. This gives it a black color, and also makes it water-tight. For the latter purpose it is also smeared, particularly the seams of its sides, with melted butter. It is ornamented with beads of different colors and with brass or silver pendants.

Before the preparation of kumiss, the churn is placed on a low stool (called *simir oloho*) not far from the fireplace (Plate XIX, Fig. 3), and is hung by a long ornamented ribbon, which passes through brass rings at the neck of the vessel, to one of the middle posts of the house. This is done in order that the churning-bag, when softened by the fluid contained in it, shall not drop down. The ribbon is of black and white horsehair twisted, and is ornamented with leather tassels. In the mouth of the churn is a hollow wooden mouthpiece called *kōñkōlōi* ("hollowed through," from *kōñdōi*, "hollowed"), through which the churning-stick (*xamsatar*, from the verb *xamsat*, "to stir") passes into the churning-vessel (Plate XVIII, Figs. 1, 4; Plate XIX, Figs. 1, 2). Both the mouthpiece and the churning-stick are ornamented with engravings, and brass or silver rings and pendants. The churning-stick is usually in the shape of a horse's hoof. The process of churning lasts from a day and a half to two days, and the women and children often assist in it. The kumiss is then poured into hide or birch-bark barrels, and is ready for use. Such kumiss has an agreeable acid taste, and contains but very little alcohol. The Yakut have no bottles in which to store their kumiss, but when travelling they put it into skin bags of the same shape as the churning-vessels. The opening of the bag is closed by two small sticks tied together at their ends. The bags are placed on the riding or pack horses like saddle-bags. They thus form skin bottles, in which the fermentation continues working out the alcoholic qualities, and the kumiss becomes a strong and heady drink.

39: Jochelson E-5 (1888-97) 1906 Yakut

facing 466

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MOUTHPIECES AND STOOL FOR KUMISS CHURN OF THE YAKUT.

KUMISS GOBLETS OF THE YAKUT.

39: Jochelson E-5 (1888-97) 1906 Yakut

facing p. 266

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39: Jochelson E-5 (1888-97) 1906 Yakut

chansky,[1] is superintended by nine male and nine female shamans.

The kumiss vessels may be divided into three types, according to their shape:—

1. The *corŏn*, an urn-shaped goblet (Plate XXI) with a small foot. These goblets are usually of a very large size, and hold from ten to fifteen litres of kumiss. Their small bases make them unstable. In drinking from them, they are held with both hands.

2. Three-legged goblets, of smaller size (Plate XXII, Fig. 2), called *üs ataxtăx corŏn*.

3. Cylindrical vessels with let-in bottoms, of varying sizes, and named according to their size,—the small ones, *mărcax;* and the large ones, *ymyya* (Plate XXII, Figs. 1, 3).

All these drinking-vessels are made from the strong, tough wood of the polar birch-tree. The first two types are carved and hollowed from one piece. Formerly the hollowing-out was done with an adze, but later with the help of a chisel. The finish, polish, and decorative work are done with knives only. The sides of these goblets are made very thin, and they easily crack on drying. A goblet left empty in the sun for a single day is sure to crack. To guard against injury, they are kept in a dark, damp place, and are, besides, freely oiled with melted butter. The oiling causes the goblets to take on the appearance of dark-brown polished vessels. For the same reason, the large kumiss ladles are also oiled (see Plate XVIII, Fig. 2).

The decorative patterns on these vessels are possibly as old as the religion with which the vessels are connected. On them we do not find any Central-Asiatic or Chinese decorative motives of the more advanced periods of Asiatic culture; but we do find such decorative motives—consisting of complicated curves, spirals, coils, conventionalized plants and animals—on the clothing, saddles, and silverware of the Yakut. The ornaments on the kumiss vessels consist almost exclusively of geometrical figures, which, judging by their native names, repre-

[1] In one of the Yakut legends recorded by Khudyakoff it is related, that, at a festival in celebration of a marriage, there were present nine male and eight female shamans.

KUMISS DRINKING VESSELS AND BUCKET OF THE YAKUT.

39: Jochelson E-5 (1888-97) 1906 Yakut

415/273

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39: Jochelson E-5 (1888-97) 1906 Yakut

415/331

sent, in more or less conventionalized form, implements or other household objects. Fig. 8 shows the patterns which occur most frequently on the kumiss vessels.

Nos. 1–3 are called *tarăx oyū*, that is, "comb-ornament," and represent combs.

Nos. 4, 5, are called *ilim xaraha oyū*, that is, "net's eyes ornament." They represent fish-nets. The dots in No. 5 stand, most probably, for caught fish.

Nos. 6, 7, are called *ăriyā oyū*, that is, "wound ornament" (from the verb *ării*, "to wind"). They represent the weaving of baskets by winding thread around bunches of grass. The same rope-pattern on the birch-bark bucket on Plate XXII, Fig. 4, which was made by winding horsehair thread round the hoop of the bucket, is called *ăriyā tigī*, which means "twisted sewing."

Nos. 8–10 are called *urasa oyū*, that is, "hut-ornament." These zigzag patterns represent the ancient conical summer houses of the Yakut. The same patterns embroidered in thread on skin bags (No. 9) are called *urasaly tigī*, that is, "hut-embroidery."

No. 14 is called *kybytya oyū*, that is, "wedge-ornament" (from the verb *kybyt*, "to force in"), and represents a wooden wedge for splitting wood.

No. 22 is called *timăx tōrdō oyū*, which means "button-base ornament." This pattern, consisting of a series of three or four inscribed diamonds, used to be embroidered on the old-time clothing of the Yakut, at the places where the buttons used to be sewed on.

No. 23 is called *kārdis oyū*, that is, "notched ornament," and represents the primitive writing of the Yakut by means of notches on sticks.

Nos. 28, 29, are called *tonohos oyū*, that is, "kumiss skin-bag ornament," and represent large kumiss vessels of hide.

It is of interest to note that all the decorative patterns so far mentioned are of a purely decorative character, and have no connection with religious ideas. This decorative character consists, not in the simple units, but in the highly harmonious and extremely symmetrical repetition of them.

39: Jochelson E-5 (1888-97) 1906 Yakut

415 Neither in the engraving and carving on the wooden kumiss
532 vessels, nor in the embroidery on the leather and birch-bark
778 vessels, do we find any realistic representation of animals or
756 objects. Realistic art was evidently not known to the Yakut in
322 the past. SĂROSHEVSKI remarks that the old-time Yakut considered it a sin for any one except shamans to carve human figures from wood. The shamans carve these roughly of wood, which represent "guardians" or evil spirits, for use in religious ceremonies, and they are not regarded as harmless to ordinary
[524] folk. I saw figures of cows and horses carved from wood or birch-bark, to be used by children as playthings, but there were never any dolls among them. Some Yakut living not far from
[321] the Russian town of Yakutsk carve from ivory, among other things human figures; but I consider this to be a rather inartistic imitation of the carvings of neighboring tribes.

415 The only attempt at realistic reproduction in the ornamenta-
531 tion of kumiss vessels is to be found in the carving of horses'
532 hoofs. Thus the feet of the three-legged goblets are often carved in the shape of horses' hoofs (Plate XXII, Fig. 2). The mouthpiece of the kumiss churning-vessel likewise often has the form of a horse's hoof. Even in a conventionalized form we do not find the representation of an animal or human figure, not even that of the horse, which forms an object of their animal cult; but, judging from the Yakut names, we do meet with conventionalized representations of parts of the human body.

Thus No. 13 (Fig. 8) is called *tonohox oyū*, that is, "vertebral ornament," and represents the spine or neck vertebra.

No. 15 is called *tyñyrax oyū*, which means "nail-ornament," and represents human nails.

No. 16 is called *tarbax oyū*, which is "finger-ornament," and is a conventionalization of the human finger. On birch-bark vessels we find the same ornament embroidered in horsehair (Plate XXII, Fig. 4), and it is then called *tarbaxtȳ tigi*, which means "finger-embroidery."

39: Jochelson E-5 (1888-97) 1906 Yakut

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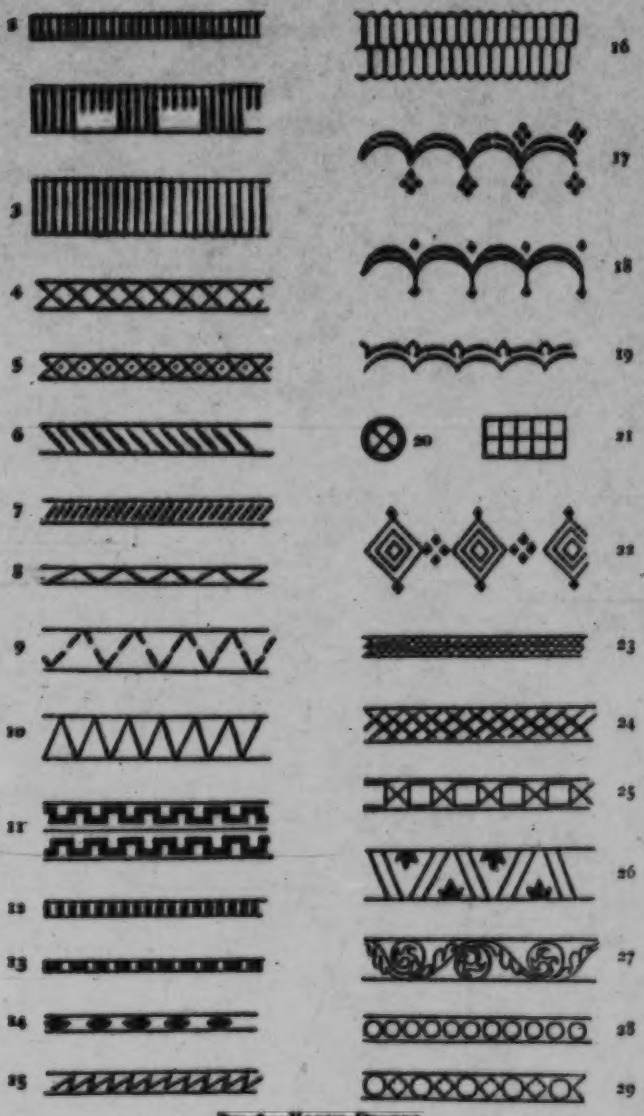

FIG. 8. YAKUT DESIGNS

39: Jochelson E-5 (1888-97) 1906 Yakut

415 323 It is likely that the "nail" and the "finger" ornaments originated from the Yakut pottery-work, which is still preserved in a very primitive form.[1]

531 532 No. 21 is an ornament copied by me from a Yakut clay pot, and is called *syāyraxmāx torduya*, which means "nail-raising." But this pattern is impressed in the soft clay, not with the nail, but with a wooden stamp named *kūōs oyūlār mas*, meaning "a stick [*mas*] for the ornamentation of clay pots [*kūōs*]."

No. 20 is also stamped on clay pots, and is called *būltāghīr torduya*, which means "rounded raising," but this pattern is also found on kumiss vessels.

There can also be found on kumiss vessels a pattern, not here illustrated, called *tañalai oyū* ("palate-ornament"). It consists of small curves which represent the arch of the palate.

Nos. 17–19 are often seen engraved in or embroidered on kumiss vessels. They are called *sarbya'n'ax oyū* ("hanging ornament"). This pattern is made with the concave face turned either downwards or upwards. In the first case it represents the hanging arch of the sky; in the second, a rope hung up by the two ends. In a form similar to the latter it is also found on the clay pots of the neolithic age of western Europe, and was named *Schnurgehänge* by the German archæologists, which name coincides with the Yakut one.

415 531 The decorative work on the kumiss goblets is usually made by engraving the patterns on the even surface of the vessel. But we also find patterns carved in relief; for instance, the net-ornament mentioned before is in relief on the goblets on Plate XXI. Some patterns made in relief (see Nos. 11, 12, Fig. 8) have a common name, *towtorgo oyū*, which means simply "relief ornaments," and which refers only to the style of carving, and not to the meaning of the pattern.

[177] Nos. 26, 27, which include conventionalized plants, are called *usuor oyū*. The word *usuor* is borrowed from the Russian word *uzor* (in Polish *wzor*), which means "pattern." The patterns too are evidently borrowed from Russian decorative motives.

[1] A short description of Yakut pottery will be given in my work on the Koryak (Jesup Expedition Publications, Vol. VI).

39: Jochelson E-5 (1888-97) 1906 Yakut

In the same way, judging by the names, the lineal ornaments of Nos. 24, 25, — the first called *duobat oyū*, and the second *saxymat oyū*, — must be regarded as borrowed from the Russians. *Duobat* is the old Russian word *doved*, which means the game of draughts; and *saxymat*, which is the Russian word *shachmat*, means "chess."

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53:Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

[p.253]

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Birchbark box. Embroidered with beads and horsehair.

53: Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

Utensils: 1—clay pots; 2—pipe; 3—scissors; 4—curved knife for making wooden vessels; 5—wooden pipe; 6—wooden holder for teacups.

articles from birchbark take first place. The tools used for woodworking,—the axe, knife, drill, and so on—were improved and made more intricate under the influence of the Russians.

Wooden and birchbark utensils, crockery, furnishings and various other small objects were of great variety and were artistically and

[p.256]

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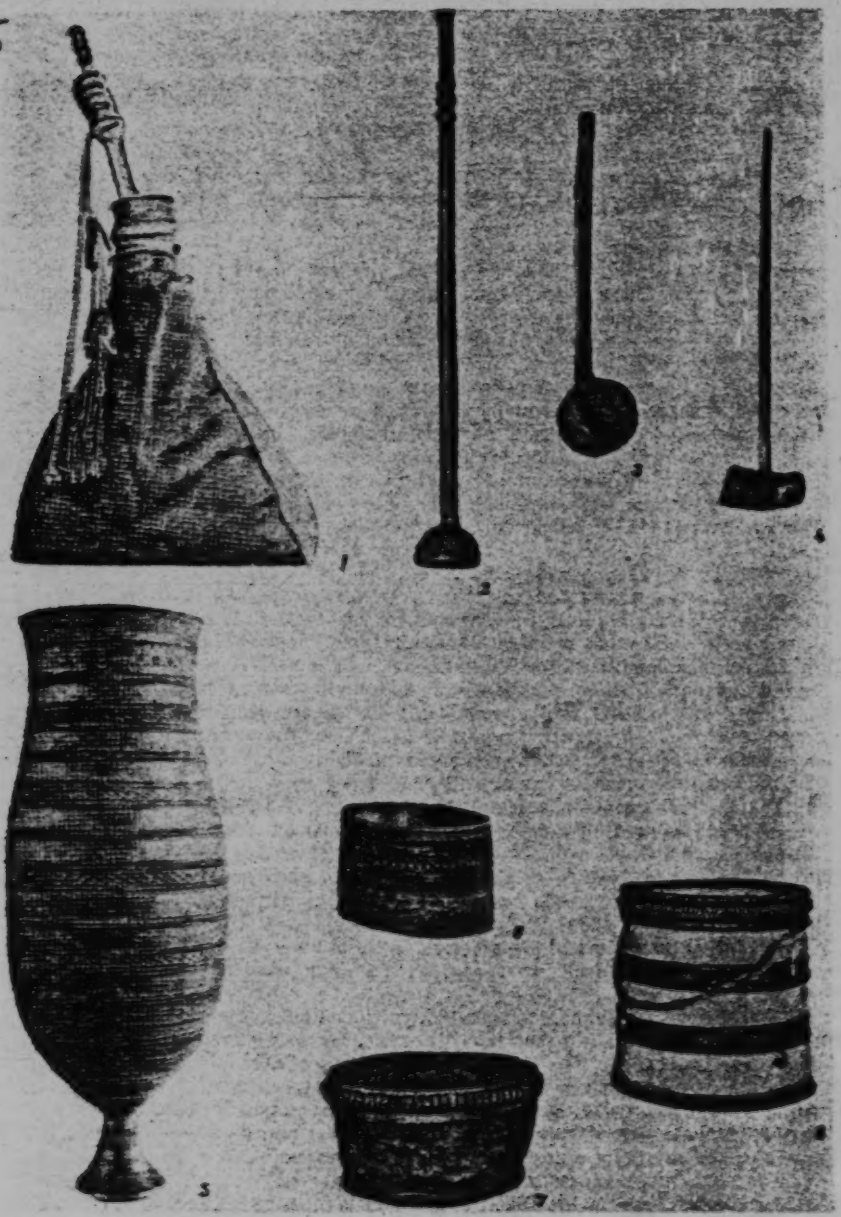


Utensils: 1—leather bag for kumys; 2—wooden churn-staff for beating kumys; 3—wooden ladle for pouring kumys; 4—churn-staff made of cow's horn for churning butter; 5—carved wooden vessel for kumys; 6—wooden dish for kumys; 7—birchbark vessel for milk; 8—birchbark pail.

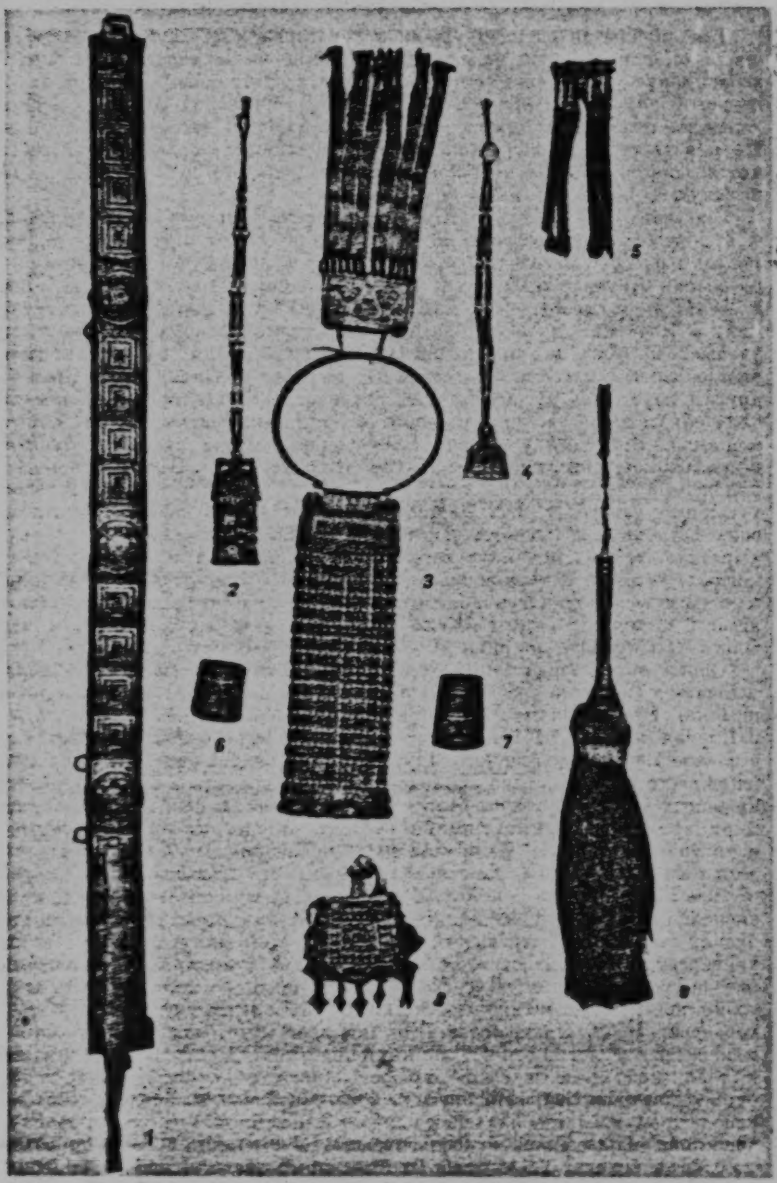
53:Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

Hearth.

somewhere near the yurt, and there were also stalls for cattle, wattle pens for foals and so on.

In ancient times, however, the Yakut summer dwelling was different in type and was called the urusa or uraha (this type had practically disappeared by the end of the 19th century). The urasa was a conical construction made of poles covered with birchbark and was fairly spacious (4 to 6 m in diameter). The urasa differed from the conical birchbark chum of the taiga nomads by having a more solid structure; it had a square frame at the top made of beams which were attached to the top ends of four poles serving as the base; the birchbark was sewn together in strips in two layers, neatly and tightly; along the walls on either side were benches almost exactly as in the yurt; the urasa was heated by an open clay raised hearth. In the north this kind of dwelling (which was preserved much longer) was covered with turf instead of birchbark or on top of the birchbark; the rods of the frame in this case were more numerous and closer together. This earthen urasa or kalymen (kholuman) was a sort of intermediate form between the conical chum and the Yakut log dwelling.

[p. 286]



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Silver ornaments: 1—silver belt; 2—embellishments for braids; 3—necklace; 4—women's tinder steel; 5—pendant for braids; 6, 7—bracelets; 8—women's bags; 9—fan.

53:Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

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Dance of girls with chorons (kumys pitchers). Amateur performance at collective farm.

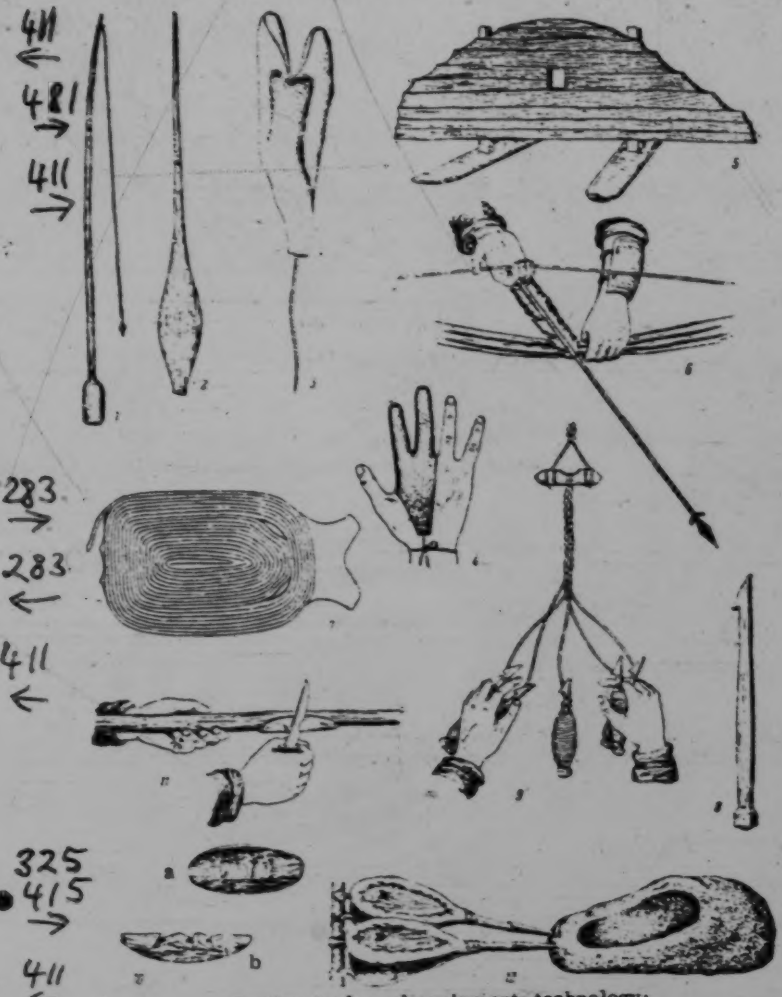
Theatre

545 During the time of the Soviet regime a Yakut national art with new forms completely unknown in Yakutiya in the pre-Revolutionary period has blossomed. Before the Revolution Yakuts did not know about the theatre, and music and singing were only found in their most primitive form. In 1925 members of the drama group attached to the People's Russian Theatre in Yakutsk was formed into the Yakut National Troupe, and in 1930 a Yakut [536] National Theatre Studio was set up. From the very first years of its existence the actors set themselves the task of a realistic portrayal of Yakut life, depunciation of the merchants and toyons, and demonstration of the greatness of the Socialist Revolution. The theatre gradually at- [87] tracted young Yakut actors and actresses who had graduated from the Central Theatre School and Studios. They performed works by Soviet-Yakut dramatists with great success.

Art

532 For centuries Yakutiya has been known for its applied ornamental art, but professional artists only began to appear in the last quarter of the 19th century.

55:Popov E-5 (no date) 1964 RV2 Yakut RV2
Dolgan



Hunting tools and equipment; technology:
1—flexible stick with cord for releasing a throwing arrow; 2—wooden throwing arrow; 3, 4—glove worn for archery; 5—shield on skis for hiding the hunter; 6—method of protecting the hand during archery; 7—method of cutting a spiral strip from reindeer-skin; 8—wooden hook for braiding lasso; 9—method of braiding lasso; 10a, b—wooden knife holder with holes for blades; 11—method of using knife holder; 12—clay kiln with blacksmith's bellows.

involved concealment: the hunters skillfully approached the herd behind a shield erected on runners. In the winter the hunters put on white coats with chestpieces made of white dogskin, enabling them to crawl over the snow